

# Jenkins House to get spruced up

Federal legislation will allow restoration of famous Civil War-era tourist attraction

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**GREENBOTTOM** — An historic Cabell County structure apparently is about to receive the restoration many say it deserves and needs.

Legislation sponsored by U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va., was approved Thursday by the House of Representatives, assuming that the Jenkins House, located on West Virginia's border with Cabell-Mason county line be preserved and restored.

"What a great day," said Ned Jones, president of the Greenbottom Society, which has sought such legislation for about a dozen years. "This historic site will finally become the attraction that we all felt it could be."

The legislation passed the House as part of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, and now must be reconciled with a Senate version before final approval.

The Jenkins House was the home of Civil War General Albert Gallatin Jenkins, and is a Cabell County tourist attraction. It was built in 1835 and rehabilitated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1992.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the house is on federal property under the jurisdiction of the Corp of Engineers, which leases it to the state.

The legislation compels the Corps to insure the preservation and restoration of the Jenkins House or be in violation of fed-

eral law, Rahall said. The house's structural integrity, Jones said, is rapidly deteriorating.

"Certainly, over the years the Greenbottom Society has experienced a great deal of frustration in its dealings with both the Corps of Engineers and the state on this historic property," Rahall said. "While I think the Corps' heart has been in the right place, I do not believe it has given this project the priority it deserves."

The plantation was part of the Corps' purchase of the home and 836 acres of farmland to replace waterfowl habitat destroyed by the Gallipolis Locks and Dam expansion.

Greenbottom Society Vice President Karen Nance said the legislation is "a good step."

"Maybe this will give (the Corps) the push they needed," she said.

The Jenkins House became a part of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History after it was rehabilitated by the Corps of Engineers. The Division has maintained that the Corps' work was not completed in a satisfactory manner, while the Greenbottom Society has sought the restoration of the house to reflect its historic character.

"Congressman Rahall heard our pleas and his response was all that we could have hoped for," Jones said. "Congressman Rahall's legislation will not only immediately stabilize this historic home, but it will require that it be restored to its original grandeur."

Nance said the house's floors are in poor shape and it has brick and plaster damage.

"I'm happy because of the fact that (the Corps) will have to do something," she said.

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